

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF
CITY OF ALAMEDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2011
7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Harrison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Harrison. Commission Members: Dahlberg, Reeves, Richards, Robillard, and Ryan (arrived at 7:01 p.m.)

Absent: Commission Members: McKean

Vacancies: (2)

Staff: Eric Fonstein and Rosemary Valeska

2. MINUTES

2.a. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 18, 2010

Motion (Reeves), seconded, and unanimous to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 18, 2010 as submitted.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

(None)

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC

Dominic Disarufino with Alternatives in Action/Bay Area School of Enterprise. He stated that he was in support of an underage club in Alameda. He asked the Commission Members for their advice regarding youth involvement in the Alameda economy. Commission Member Reeves recommended that he encourage his friends and family to "Buy Alameda." Also, graffiti should be reported to the police department, as we want nice, clean facades for our buildings. Commission Member Richards added that it matters where you spend your dollars – sales tax "keeps the lights on." He also stated that we should treat the whole island as our home and pick up trash. The Chair noted that Dominic and the other young people attending this meeting were his students and thanked them for coming.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(None)

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.a. Nomination and election of a new Vice Chair

Motion (Harrison), seconded, and unanimous to elect Commission Member Reeves as Vice Chair.

6.b. "Going Forward" Community Planning Strategy for Alameda Point

Deputy City Manager Jennifer Ott (DCM) recapped the staff report that was provided in the meeting packet. She stated that she hoped to go through the workbook exercise with the EDC Members at this meeting.

She stated that the City was getting close to hiring a variety of consultants to help staff with the Visioning Process over the next six months. This process should be completed by July 2011. The 18-to-24-month CEQA/entitlement phase should be completed by July 2013. The City admits that this is an aggressive schedule; however, we will be building upon previous plans. We are going to focus on issues that we know people have concerns about, e.g., traffic and fiscal sustainability.

The City will be responding to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) issued by Lawrence Berkeley National Labs (LBNL) for a second campus and we will be proposing a site at Alameda Point. The City is soliciting letters of support to send with our response to the RFQ and the DCM encouraged the EDC Members help in this effort. The project would be funded by the Department of Energy and managed by U.C. Berkeley. They would get their own funding and would not be dependent upon redevelopment funds. LBNL could create a catalyst for Alameda Point by attracting other private investment to Alameda Point and creating jobs.

The DCM stated that at the community workshops, there was controversy about community benefits and trade-offs. How do we pay for community benefits – could more housing be considered as a trade-off? Community benefits may have to be phased.

At this time, the DCM began the workbook exercise with the EDC. Below is a recap of the comments and responses:

EDC MEMBER NAME	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	DCM RESPONSES
HARRISON	Asked about the status of the raw data that came out of the community workshops.	That data is still being processed. One thing that came out of the workshops is that people are more concerned about the number of units as opposed to the type of units. They are concerned about traffic impacts. There were debates about jobs/housing balance.

EDC MEMBER NAME	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	DCM RESPONSES
DAHLBERG	Asked how much of Alameda Point would be used by LBNL.	We are still working on the site plan. There are 915 acres in the development footprint. We are looking at 30-90 acres for LBNL, so about ten percent.
REEVES	Asked about the status of the VA facility.	This is still in the works and the City would like to see this project move forward. Fish & Wildlife has concerns about impacts on endangered species (e.g., least terns) on the runway. This would be a federal-to-federal transfer outside of the development footprint.
RICHARDS	Asked what would happen if we just left the base alone.	There will be an alternatives analysis. The infrastructure is deteriorating. Alameda Point tenants have concerns. Over the long term, it is not sustainable to leave it as-is.
RICHARDS	The development at South Shore and Harbor Bay were not well thought out. How are we going to get people on or off the island? There should be a Community Benefits choice in the book that states, "How does this affect people who already live here?"	That is a valid question. We need to communicate what advantages there would be to current residents.
RICHARDS	Asked if we don't develop the base, won't the Navy sell it to someone who will.	We are in this pretty deep with the Navy and we intend to do something. We are looking at emphasizing jobs as originally planned.
ROBILLARD	Asked how many employees are planned for LBNL.	800 employees to start (reply by Fonstein)
ROBILLARD	Expressed concern about the traffic impacts resulting from those employees.	This would be a reverse commute. We have a plan for transportation. We have to show you that we have figured this out.
ROBILLARD	Stated that he would like to see a world-class hotel, marinas, offices, VA facility.	Developers she has spoken with have stated that you are not going to get world-class jobs without some housing, mixed-use, and retail – you need the right balance.
HARRISON	Asked how anything could be proposed without a transit solution. The City should be taking the initiative on transit now. Cited the traffic back-up along Atlantic every month after the antiques fair.	We need a "Day One" strategy to attract people who would use transit; otherwise, you have a car culture. We have to address traffic throughout the island. Transit agencies require subsidies and need a critical mass to get them to come serve an area.

EDC MEMBER NAME	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	DCM RESPONSES
HARRISON	Stated despite the improvements made at Bayport, there are still only four ways off the island. Asked if we are going to have to go after federal or state funds to get a new tunnel.	The City is always going after funding. However, funding for a new crossing is not likely. We will rely on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. There is a long list of tools. We will need them all to make it work. It will be a combination of "carrots and sticks." We would stop development if needed.
ROBILLARD	Asked how transportation would be funded.	There would be assessments on homes in the new development. This cannot be at the whim of budgets. Every home and business will pay into an assessment to fund transportation.
RICHARDS	Stated that even if the busses are ten minutes apart, you can't force people to take the bus if taking the car is faster.	Cited an example of "cue jump lanes" for busses. Transportation has to be a better solution than that a car. Alamedans use transit now, e.g., busses to SF on work days and the 51 line is heavily used.
HARRISON	Noted that some bus lines are facing cuts or elimination.	Noted that many employers are participating in the EcoPass program.
ROBILLARD	Noted that five-star hotel customers will not use the bus.	
HARRISON	Asked what the worst-case scenario was if we don't develop Alameda Point.	Stated that she has never been tasked by ARRA to look into that. BRAC's sole purpose is to dispose property and get it off the books.
DAHLBERG	Asked when our lease with the Navy expires.	There is really no expiration date. The terminology used is "Lease in furtherance of conveyance." The Navy is required to keep the lease in place while we try to develop. If the Navy decided to sell the property, they would need our assistance for the State Lands Exchange of the public trust lands. We need to control our fate. Stated that what she is hearing from the EDC is that there needs to be a focus on jobs, needs to be checks and balances on development, and sustainable transportation.
REEVES	We are not going to find anyone who is going to build a bridge in this economy.	

EDC MEMBER NAME	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	DCM RESPONSES
HARRISON	Regarding "stop development," people need to know that development will happen. People need to know the costs if development does not happen.	"Stop development" would refer to a scenario where, for example, there were two times more trips than expected, then we have to stop things from happening. We need to be sure that we are meeting our projections. This would mean using the checks and balances but it is not a choice of "just leaving it there."
HARRISON	Asked about adaptive reuse. How much investment would be needed.	That depends on the building. Some will require millions and other buildings are already being leased and used. Regarding demands on infrastructure, there are alternatives in cutting-edge technology to reduce demand on sewers and storm drains. There will be an environmental component. There can be less impacts on EBMUD and the sewer/storm drain system. As a result of the Governor's proposed budget, redevelopment bonds may not be an option to help pay for redevelopment.
REEVES	Asked about toxic clean-up.	By July 2013, most of the base will be clean enough to be transferred to the City. The Navy has been spending hundreds of millions of dollars on clean-up. The hot spots will be contained but we can work around it.
DAHLBERG	What is the next big move?	LBNL. We are doing everything possible. They need to know that the community wants them.
HARRISON	What is the likelihood that they will choose us?	We are cautiously optimistic. We have a lot of land and could easily accommodate a 2,000 s.f. campus. They own land in Richmond but we will offer our site at no cost. Also, we have the advantages of having AMP and our reputation for safety. Our main problem is our distance from Berkeley. They want the site to be within a 25-minute drive of Berkeley. Our staff has done this drive several times at different times of the day and has always stayed within the time limit. The Oakland Army Base is also a contender but we don't know what they are offering.

The Chair thanked the DCM for her presentation. This item was presented to the EDC for information-gathering purposes, only; no formal action was requested.

7. REPORTS

(None)

8. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

8.a. Upcoming EDC Agenda Items

Mr. Fonstein recapped the staff report that was provided in the meeting packet. He added that in the future, the DCM will address redevelopment and State actions and how they will affect the City.

9. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF

The Chair stated that the EDC should consider holding occasional meetings outside of the City Council Chambers at different locations on the island. Commission Member Reeves suggested joint meetings of the EDC and the Economic Development Committees of the business associations.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Valeska
EDC Recording Secretary

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